

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 8-22 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 21 and 22 are amended, and claims 23 and 24 are canceled, without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited therein. Support for amended claims 21 and 22, can be found, for example, in the specification, at page 34, lines 13-22. No new matter is added.

Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 1-3 and 8-20 are allowed.

The Quayle Action rejects claims 21-24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,190,452 to Sakurada et al. (hereinafter Sakurada), or in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sakurada. As discussed above, claims 23 and 24 are canceled, and thus the rejection of claims 23 and 24 is moot. The rejection of claims 21 and 22 is respectfully traversed.

Claims 21 and 22 are amended to clarify that claims 21 and 22 are method claims, not product-by-process claims. In particular, Applicants submit that claims 21 and 22 further define the method of claims 1 and 2 in that they further define the raw material melt used in the method.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 21 and 22 are allowable at least for the reasons independent claim 1 is allowable, as well as for the additional features these claims recite. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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